Summary & take home messages

Judgement of the European Court of Justice results in a general uncertainty on various levels

- Pollen is an ingredient, which is not in line with honey regulation
- Various interpretation on the judgement were circulated
- What is the reference for a labelling threshold
- How to measure gm pollen in honey
- Are there measures to guarantee coexistence
- Consequence for the honey market: beekeepers in EU and third countries, exporters importers & packers, authorities, consumers
Summary & take home messages

• Theoretically and in practise the honey market was and is affected
• In particular on the market of third countries
• Increasing costs due to analysis and changing prices
• Permanent uncertainty
Summary & take home messages

• Need for an quick agreement on the interpretation of the judgement
• Clear position presented by the EU Com: Reference will be the total amount of pollen in honey
• Honey has to be considered as any other food: 0.9% labelling threshold should be applied
For detection of gm pollen in honey it is essential to agree on the reference quickly
But is hard to measure, PCR solution will be preferable
Methodology must be improved
  • Gaps are identified
  • Suggestions to solve problems are in discussion
International standardisation and validation is needed
It will take some time to develop, validate and harmonize methods
However the detection of little amount is difficult
Summary & take home messages

• Measures to guarantee coexistence for authorized GMOs difficult, controversial debate
• No clear recommendation
• Lack of knowledge regarding relation of distance and content of pollen in honey
• Good starting points available
  • Location register
  • Register of bee hives
  • Data on frequency and diversity of pollen in honey are available, but need to assess in more detail
  • Communication & agreements might help to reduce problems
  • Spatial and temporal aspects might be considered
  • Regional separation (GM or GM free regions)
Summary & take home messages

• Scientific field releases
  • Communication and agreements
  • Private regulation on costs for analysis, compensation for not marketable honey
Honey market

- Permanent uncertainty
- Asynchronous authorization, labelling
- Underestimating the reaction of consumers, reaction not uniform
- Time is important factor

Suggestions

- Zero tolerance: not possible, solution might be a 0.1% technical threshold
- Quantification is difficult?
- Changing directives?